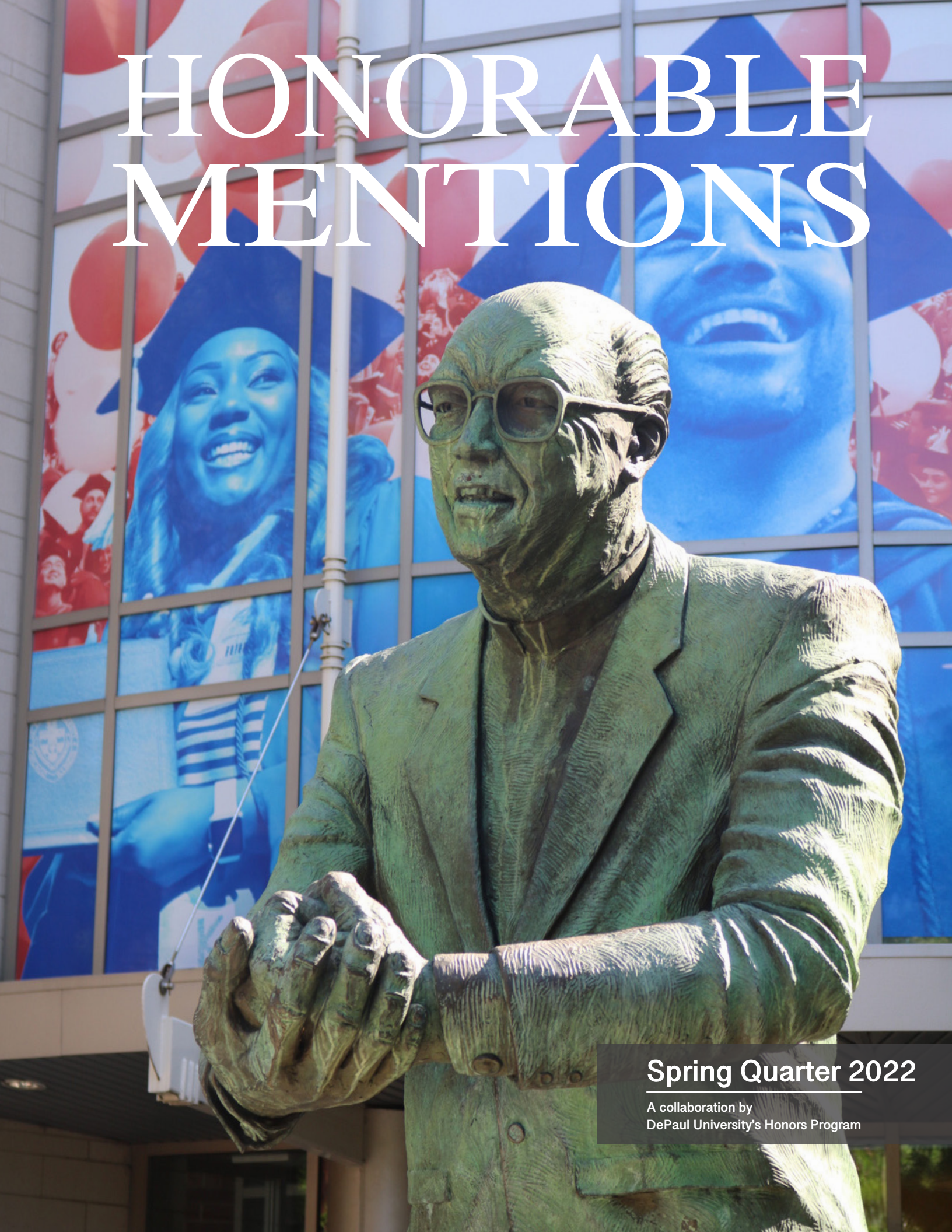


HONORABLE MENTIONS

A bronze statue of a man with glasses and a suit, standing in front of a large window with a colorful mural of graduates. The statue is the central focus, with its hands clasped in front of it. The background features a large window with a mural of graduates in blue and red, with red balloons visible in the upper left.

Spring Quarter 2022

A collaboration by
DePaul University's Honors Program

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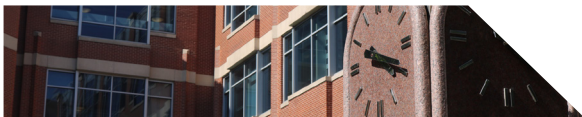
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On the cover: John T. Richardson Library at DePaul University.

Content Editor: Julia Matuszek
 Layout and Design Editor: Ben Stumpe
 Cover Photograph: Ben Stumpe

HONORABLE UPDATES

Words from the HSG President

By Elizabeth Whitcomb



Hey all! This is my third and final time writing on behalf of the Honors Student Government. As I am graduating in the fall, I will not serve on the Honors Student Government Executive Board next year. I am extremely grateful for this opportunity to serve the Honors Community, not only this year, but for the past two years as well. The students and faculty I have been able to work with are nothing short of amazing.

I especially want to give a shout out to the 2021-2022 Honors Student Government Executive Board. First, a thank you to our Vice President Ben for always being there when needed and bringing energy to the meetings. Our communications director Liz has done a fantastic job running our social media and keeping everyone up to date on HSG happenings. Thank you to our ambassador chairs, Madison and Shayaan, for ensuring prospective Honors students receive the support they need.

Bethany and Joana have killed it planning community service events and brainstorming ways to increase participation. The academic,

representatives, Zach and Ali represented honors students at UHPC meetings throughout the year. It has been great teaming up with them on some initiatives. Thank you to Julia who puts in so much work to complete this publication

fun Honors Ball and a multitude of activities for Honors students this year. I appreciate the efforts from the entire Executive Board more than I can describe.

With the help of this incredible team, we have been able to make a great reintroduction into inperson Honors Program activities. The Honors Ball went off without a hitch for the first time in two years, students volunteered at many events, including two marathons, and a change was made in the Honors handbook to reflect student feedback. The Honors curriculum no longer has essay page length requirements for each class. With the support of UHPC, we removed these requirements in order to make room for other types of assignments that equally help learning. This could not have happened without all of the feedback received from fellow Honors students.

As I wrap this up, along with my time at DePaul, I want to wish you all a happy summer. I hope the rest of the year is not too strenuous and you can find some time to relax.



Elizabeth (L) with Zeeshan and Anna at the 2022 Honors Ball.

every quarter. Finally, a thank you to Anna and Zeeshan, our wonderful social chairs. Not only are they an incredible team, they also hosted a

HONORABLE EVENTS

HSG at the 2022 Shamrock Shuffle

By Julia Matuszek

On Sunday, March 20th a group of Honors students rolled out of bed quite early in the morning, before the sun was even up, and bundled up in green clothes as they headed down to the Loop and volunteered together at the Annual Chicago Shamrock Shuffle. While there they helped set up a Gatorade station where they mixed, poured, and served close to about 500 cups (by an estimate) of Gatorade to runners. As they were passing out drinks they helped cheer on runners throughout the whole race, as they tried to keep that St. Patrick's Day spirit up. The day consisted of some spilled drinks, but also many hugs, laughs and cheers! Consider joining the Honors Program as we volunteer again next year on March 26th, 2023!



Bethany hard at work pouring out Gatorade for the runners.



Bethany and Julia preparing the Gatorade together.



All of the volunteer Honors students right before the race began!



Adamson and Giorgia handing out drinks to runners.

The 2022 Honors Ball

By Anna Lavalley and Zeeshan Muzammil

This April, the Honors Program held the long awaited Honors Ball in Cortelyou Commons. Per a student vote, the theme for the evening was “Night on the Red Carpet”. It was a glamorous return to the event after a hiatus since 2020. The Honors Ball is widely known as one of the biggest events of the year for the Honors Program.

In planning the event, the Honors Student Government looked to students for ideas on the theme, decoration, and advertising. The theme was promptly decided on, and students helped in finding inspiration and decor for the night. Mikyhia Worsham, a sophomore at DePaul and Honors Program student, designed a stunning poster to promote the ball to students. The poster was sent to every Honors student’s email and plastered on bulletin boards across campus.

On Friday, April 8th, Cortelyou Commons was adorned in shining golds and bright reds for the occasion. Students were greeted with a red carpet to descend and mini Oscar awards to pose with. They arrived dressed red carpet ready, many inspired by their favorite celebrities or showing off their unique styles. With an attendance of over 140 people, the ball was sensational.

Students enjoyed refreshments and desserts provided by Chartwells and hit the dance floor enjoying a vast variety of tunes. The commons were colorfully lit with lights provided by OSI and Blue Demon Theatre (thank you Ben Stumpe!). Some students resisted the night ending, dancing until the lights came on and the tables were cleaned.

On behalf of the Honors Student Government, we would like to thank every student and faculty member who helped make this night possible. Thank you especially to Pricilla Bautista and the HSG President Elizabeth Whitcomb for your incredible help in planning with us. We could not be more grateful for everyone who planned, decorated, and danced with us on this night. We are excited to do it again next year!



The 2021-2022 HSG Board group photo from the Honors Ball.



Anna and Ali running the front table.



Zeeshan at the photo booth.

2022 Honors Program Graduates

As another school year comes to an end, we must say goodbye to our graduating Honors Class of 2022! Congratulations to all the graduates! The Honors Program and *Honorable Mentions* miss you already!

Carolina Aceves
 Arsalan Afshar
 Andrew Aguilera
 Zena Ahmad
 Alexis Albrecht
 Ahtziri Alviso
 Cheyenne Angus
 Tavia Bahena
 Madeline Bal
 Mackenzie Baldner
 Camila Barrientos
 Alyssa Befumo
 Maya Behling
 Basil Beyreis-Heim
 Sean Bobrov
 John Bolger
 Nicole Burdette
 Dylan Burkhart
 Ryan Burns
 Esme Burrows
 Kennedy Cadichon
 Chloe Cardaras
 Annie Carroll
 Bianca Castillo
 Declan Cavanaugh
 Amna Cehaja
 Daniela Ceja
 Ayyan Chaudhry
 Zachary Cherian
 Phoeby Chodash
 Sierriah Clemons
 Natalie Codina
 Samantha Cone
 Marissa Cooper
 Timothy Cooper
 Alba Corney
 Rebecca Cramer
 Sarah Dababneh
 Peter Das
 Zoie Daugherty
 Shivani Dave
 Pauline DeLeon
 Matthew Donald
 Daniel Douros
 Olivia English
 Alexander Eremin
 Maureen Fagan
 Claudia Feilmeyer
 Madeleine Fernandez Laris
 Sarah Ferrara
 Alyssa Filicichia
 Veronika Filip
 Priya Fink
 Matthew Friedland
 Miakoda Frost
 Paige Fullman
 Olivia Garcia
 Vanessa Garcia
 Emily Garman
 Tyler Garman
 Kevin Gasca
 Gurvir Gill
 Magdalene Goetz
 Aviv Goldman
 Cassandra Gomez
 Matthew Goncher
 Carter Greene
 Nicholas Gricus
 Maria Guerrero
 Alexander Haase

Brigid Hackett
 Marlana Hadas
 Katherine Hamilton
 Rachel Hannigan
 Gracie Hart
 Taylor Hartley
 Emily Hartman
 Jason Hebblethwaite
 Walter James Husmillo
 Gabriel Inoshita
 Benjamin Jaeger
 Nour Jaghama
 Wesley Janicki
 Carrera Joceiline
 Samuel Johnson-Vrooman
 Marissa Justin
 Brandon Justiniano
 Dylan Kennelly
 Georgia Kerford
 Tassos Kirkos
 Russell Klopp
 Shane Knanishu
 Kacie Koenig
 Hannah Kornblut
 Andreas Kotsifas
 Theodora Koulouvaris
 Sara Kouvelis
 Eleni Kritikos
 Bethany Kujawinski
 Marta Lakomy
 Kaitlyn Lane
 Hannah Lau
 Alexandra Lenox
 Megan Love
 Claire Lunde
 Mae Isabelle Madrid
 Rebecca Mahannah
 Robbie Majewski
 Ariana Mansour
 Francis Marfone
 Madeline Martin
 Sydnie Martin
 Erin McKenna
 Hazel McLain
 Morris McLennan
 Claire McNulty
 Hannah Meyer
 Jacqueline Michaels
 Katherine Minch
 Monika Miranda Velasquez
 Beyla Mittal
 Dayana Mohammad Farid
 Angelina Moore
 Gillian Murphey
 Jack Murphy
 Winter Murray
 Luke Myers
 Sonny Napolitano
 Emma Nelson
 Lily Nelson
 Andrew Nunez
 Sara Nur-Awaleh
 Jennifer Ogwumike
 Karina Orozco
 Kacper Pachut
 Alyssa Fae Pangilinan
 Georgia Pappas
 Natalie Perri
 Cole Peterson
 Isabella Petri

Yessica Pineda
 Olivia Piotrowski
 Haley Pratt
 Teodora Preradovic
 Fakhriyakhon Pulatova
 Kavya Ramasharma
 Riley Reed
 Jeremy Reutebuch
 Brizanelly Romero
 Danielle Ross
 Matthew Rosson
 Elijah Rubenstein
 Adam Rutkowski
 Sophie Ryall
 Natalia Salamon
 Cassandra Salvador
 Martylinette Sanchez
 Olivia Santos
 Devin Sasse
 Elena Sasso
 Giovanna Scarabaggio
 Ryan Schmidt
 Maria Schroeder
 Kelly Schweikert
 Zoe Seipp
 Natalia Semaniuk
 Laith Shaban
 Trevor Sheehan
 Farheen Shethwala
 Emily Sicinski
 Leilani Silva
 Samuel Simone
 Marcelina Skowronski
 Jacob Smetanin
 Gerard-Oahu Soriano
 Ben Stumpe
 Benjamin Sturr
 Agron Sulejmani
 Genevieve Swanson
 Thomas Sykora
 Tam Ta
 David Taullahu
 Brandon Tejeras
 Honey Tey
 Allyson Thenhaus
 Simone Timol
 Sarah Tohme
 Avery Tunstill
 Alana Uriarte
 Gia Valdez
 Ana Valenzuela
 Lauren Vega
 Karisma Venegas
 Evan Vetter
 Helen Wargo
 Lauren Watson
 Mary Weber
 William Wehrwein
 Dylan Wellman
 Peter Werderitch
 Oskar Westbridge
 Peter Wild Crea
 Claudia Wilkie
 Sarah Willi
 Aidan Williams
 Leanne Xu
 Arlo Yi
 Ryan Zobel
 Sophia Zykowski

2022 Honors Distinction Students

Within the Honors Program, any Honors Student who completes Honors Partnership, Honors Leadership, and Honors Scholarship is awarded with Honors Distinction. Congratulations to all our 2022 Graduates who have earned Honors Distinction this year!

Carolina Aceves
Zachary Cherian
Olivia English
Madeleine Fernandez Laris
Miakoda Frost
Rachel Hannigan
Gracie Hart
Bethany Kujawinski
Beyla Mittal
Jack Murphy
Georgia Pappas
Yessica Pineda
Martylinette Sanchez
Natalia Semaniuk
Ben Stumpe
David Taullahu

2022 Honors Senior Thesis Projects

Honors students have the ability to create a thesis project in order to fulfill their Honors Capstone requirement. Congratulations to all listed Honors students on completing their thesis!

Peter Wild Crea

Review of Parkinson's Disease Genes: Does POE influence GBA?

Thesis Director: Eiron Cudaback

Faculty Reader: Margaret Bell

Claudia Wilkie

Human Plague in Madagascar

Thesis Director: Julianna Perez

Faculty Reader: Rachel Scott

Theodora Koulouvaris

The Role of the News Media: How the Trump Era Shaped the Future of Journalism

Thesis Director: Benjamin Epstein

Faculty Reader: Christopher Bury

Gillian Murphey

Does Sovereignty Create Safety?

Thesis Director: Kelly Tzoumis

Faculty Reader: Joseph Mello

John Murphy

Chôra: A Third Kind Outside Binary Ontology

Thesis Director: Michael Naas

Faculty Reader: Fanny Soderback

Claire McNulty

Neoliberalism Doesn't Create Paradise: How Tourism Sustains Human Rights Violations

Against Garifuna Communities

Thesis Director: Susana Martinez

Faculty Reader: Rose Spalding

Linette Sanchez

The Braceros Behind the Bracero Program, H-2A Visa Workers, and the US Immigration System Today

Thesis Director: Bill Johnson Gonzalez

Faculty Reader: Rose Spalding

Avery Tunstall

Free Labor and American Farming: An Analysis of the Yeoman Myth and the Split Between Productive and Reproductive Labor

Thesis Director: Kathleen Arnold

Faculty Reader: Margaret Storey

Priya Fink

Exploring Music Through Silence: A Study of John Cage and 4'33"

Thesis Director: Christopher Jones

Faculty Reader: Michael Lewanski

Caroline Maxwell

Contemporary John Donne

Thesis Director: Chris Solis Green

Faculty Reader: David Welch

Genevieve Swanson

Harder Said than Done a play by Genevieve Swanson

Thesis Director: Ali-Reza Mirsajadi

Faculty Reader: Jennifer Finstrom

Ally Filicicchia

That Ringing Bell: The American Death Penalty as an Arm of White Supremacy in the United States

Thesis Director: James Walker

Faculty Reader: Kenneth Butigan

Gurvur Gill

Martial Constructions: How Perceptions of Sikhs Shaped Conflict

Thesis Director: Kalyani Menon

Faculty Reader: Rajit Mazumbder

Sophie Ryall

Integration, I-630, and the Walton's: A Historical Analysis on the Effects of Housing Segregation in Little Rock's Public School System

Thesis Director: Molly Andolina

Faculty Reader: Horace Hall

MENTIONS REFLECTIONS

My Three Years at DePaul

By Rachel Hannigan

My first quarter at DePaul was Autumn Quarter of 2019, and Spring of 2022 is my last. While I am graduating with my undergrad a year early, it has been far from easy.

My first experience here was in the Honors Program; my Honors Explore class was where I made some of my closest friends and I visited a handful of places around the city I've never been before, despite living in Chicago my whole life.

I breezed through Autumn and Winter Quarters until it halted due to the pandemic. With half of my college experience online, I tried to make the best of my experience. Both students and professors were adjusting to the new format, and it was hard for everyone. However, it was nice to relax and unwind at first and it gave me the perspective I needed to change my major (a few times!), and while I would like the pandemic to be over, I can earnestly say I made the most of my online experience.

Coming back in-person was an adjustment for everyone, but it just persuaded me to be as involved as I could. I joined new clubs, I hung out on campus as frequently as I could, I took advantage of DePaul's resources (including going to the Art Institute as often as my schedule would allow me!) and now, I'm finally graduating.

On June 12th when I walk across the stage at Wintrust Arena, I will walk with the knowledge that I chose the right university for me, and that I spent these last three years doing what made me happy, and I have DePaul and the Honors Program to thank for that!



The views on my daily Brown Line trips from Chicago's best campus!

An Interview with Morris McLennan

By Liz Bazzoli

The Theatre School's final show in its 2021-2022 season opened Friday, May 20th. Every year, The Theatre School features as part of its mainstage season a new play written by a senior BFA playwright. Playwriting majors have the opportunity to feature their work during Wrights of Spring, an annual festival at TTS, and it is from these plays that a mainstage production is selected.

This year's new play is *Meeting Points*, written by senior playwright Morris McLennan. The play follows the stories of four different characters as they navigate queer identity and companionship. I actually had the opportunity to see *Meeting Points* at last year's Wrights of Spring, but this will be the first time the show is being performed live and in person. I decided to reach out to Morris McLennan to ask about the process of adapting his work into a mainstage show. Besides being a playwright at TTS, McLennan is also an active member of DePaul's Honors program and his current production is evocative of the hard work and success of the Honors community.

What brought you to the theatre, specifically playwriting?

[MM]: When I was in high school, I used to read Charles Mee plays in class instead of paying attention because all of his plays are available for free online. I thought, 'That looks kind of fun! Maybe I can do that!' And it turns out, it is very fun. So now I am a playwright.

When did you start the process of writing *Meeting Points*? What was your inspiration?

[MM]: I started *Meeting Points* because Carlos Murillo forced me to! Jokes aside, I would not have written anything early in the pandemic if I was not required to for school. I was creatively drained and sort of traumatized. I drew from a lot of my memories and past relationships to create *Meeting Points* because I had nothing else to draw from; I was alone in my room all day and all night, and was having no new experiences to prompt writing. So, *Meeting Points* was my attempt at making sense of my past experiences.

Do you see *Meeting Points* as being in communication with the other plays you've written thus far?

[MM]: All of my work promotes my moral and philosophical worldview— I think all writers' work does, to some extent. So a lot of my plays are sort of absurdist and goofy and hinge on the idea that people are inherently good.

Also, a lot of my plays are loosely science fiction because I think that science fiction is actually about loneliness. I think that we are all fundamentally alone and it is entirely out of our control, and that is such a huge and terrifying thing to think about, that it can only really be explored by thinking about aliens and monsters and apocalypses.

When I've had to describe *Meeting Points* in one sentence, I've called it an apocalypse rom-com. So I think it fits nicely in with my other work and the stuff I've been excited to write about over the past five-ish years.

I remember watching the Zoom version of *Meeting Points* last year during Wrights of Spring. What has it been like adapting the play from the virtual to the physical stage?

[MM]: I've described the feeling like a door opening to a part of my brain that I couldn't access before. Working with this script entirely online was fun, but it was like I didn't see the entire picture. As soon as I got into the room, it suddenly clicked. I felt like I actually understood where I was and where I was going. I also really value the collaborative element to our process—the cast and creative team has really helped me understand the *Meeting Points* world so much better than I ever could have understood it alone.

What's your mission as a theatre artist? What drives you to write plays?

[MM]: I have a spiritual and erotic drive to write, and that's it. It fulfills a part of me that nothing else can. That's the selfish half of my "why."

The non-selfish half of my "why" is that I want to tell the stories I needed to hear when I was younger. I want to tell stories that anonymous strangers out in the world need to hear. I think that if my work helps even one person, then it's worth it.

The responsibility of the theatre artist in relation to the audience is a historically contentious topic. Do you think theatre has a responsibility (and the capability) to advance social justice? What do you hope for the future of theatre?

[MM]: This is a complicated question, because I do love improving society, but I also love writing assholes. I don't really think theater is important enough in America to change our society. Most Americans (and politicians) don't go to the theater. But that's fine—theater doesn't have to change everybody's lives, because it will inevitably change some people's lives. And that just has to be good enough.

Again, all my work promotes my personal ideologies, because I can't imagine ideologically neutral art; I don't think it exists. And hopefully my thoughts inspire some positive change in some people's lives.

What are your plans and goals post-graduation?

[MM]: For now, my only plans are writing and job hunting..

What advice would you give to aspiring playwrights and storytellers, especially those seeking to create meaningful and authentic representation?

[MM]: This is a tough question. I also feel like I'm way too young to offer advice. But here's my best attempt:

You have to be brave and vulnerable. You have to put yourself into your work, because you are never going to understand anyone other than yourself. You have to put other people into your work because you're not any more important than other people. You have to fail, a lot. You have to be okay with failure. You have to be compassionate towards everyone, especially yourself. Especially who you were when you first started writing—the little kid with a flashlight and a notebook under a blanket in your heart.

Everyone experiences reality completely differently. Your job is to share your reality. Your version of truth is important, because we need as many diverse versions of truth as we can get. Your version of truth is important because it makes the world less lonely for people like you. Tell fantastical true stories and honest fictions. Write constantly. Write stories you wish already existed. Write stories that heal you.

I'm only 22 years old, though, and I plan on writing for another 50 to 70 years, depending on how long I live. So this is what I try to do, for now. And it is with compassion that I tell you, I know it is going to change.

Honors in Action: Brazilian Music and Dance

An Overview of Cathy Elias's HON 205, Interdisciplinary Arts

By Allison Scott

Academia tends to compartmentalize, to separate disciplines into distinct, highly specific subsections. Most things, however, are not as clean cut as we make them out to be. Anybody who exists in the real world understands that it is impossible to separate the social, cultural, political, and human aspects of life. Exploring such interconnection is the purpose of the Honors Interdisciplinary Arts (HON 205) courses. One of the sections of this course explores Brazilian Music and Dance, taught by Professor Cathy Elias. This class studies Samba, the archetypical Brazilian song form, and Carnival dances that have become a form of cultural heritage and self-image for Brazilians. Professor Elias was kind enough to sit down and talk with me about this course, giving incredible insight into the power of music and dance.

With a background in voice and viola at Julliard, a master's degree in music theory, and continuing with a divinity degree, Professor Cathy Elias has always been interested in the power of music. She explains how music, specifically pop music, tells the stories of the culture. In the spirit of interdisciplinary studies, this class explores this connection in the specific context of Brazil.

Like the United States, Brazil has a long history of colonization and slavery, reflected in its music. Unlike the U.S., Brazilian slavery was less separative and destructive, creating more culturally diverse music. Not to mention Brazil's history with dictatorship, which further necessitated the use of coded language and musical analogy.

And while this class focuses on Brazil, the connections to the U.S. are no accident. Professor Elias highlights how exploring complicated cultural and political debates through the lens of another country can help consider similar ideas in the U.S., as some distance can reveal new perspectives. More broadly, music operates in a similar way, giving us new approaches to explore complex issues. Professor Elias also highlights how important it is to step into the unknown and challenge ourselves to explore outside our comfort zone. She emphasizes that her classroom is not necessarily a safe space (which may not even be attainable) but is an honest space where mistakes, disagreement, and open dialogue are more than welcome. It is crucial to learn how to enter unfamiliar contexts, eager to listen and learn, and to be open to changing one's opinions or worldviews.



This class explores these ideas in a variety of ways, again embracing the concept of interdisciplinary studies. A typical week consists of lots of music, which is to be expected, often accompanied by translations from the original Portuguese. In addition, there are readings with an emphasis on contextualization and discussion. Professor Elias also invites four speakers to visit the class, which typically includes a Brazilian pop artist, a professor of theology from a Brazilian university, a professional Brazilian dancer, and an expert on Brazilian Carnival instruments. The latter two guests attend in person and give the class lessons on Brazilian dance and instrumentation, which Professor Elias was kind enough to provide pictures of. In past years, she has even taken students to the Brazilian Carnival in Chicago to experience the festivities themselves!

As for the final, students are asked to reflect on their experiences and apply their knowledge however they see best fit. Professor Elias

describes how some students have delved into the concepts of the class by writing papers, choreographing a dance to teach the class, designing playlist albums with unique cover art, or even creating a children's book! Again, this class is about pushing yourself and fully embracing new experiences, something Professor Elias encourages at every step of the way.

For those interested in taking a leap and exploring Brazilian music and dance, Professor Elias typically teaches this section of HON 205 every winter quarter. If that's not quite your style, Professor Elias also teaches a course on The Beatles! And there is plenty to take away for those who aren't able to take one of these courses. Learning to step into the unknown and appreciate differences is an incredible skill and one that is applicable in almost every aspect of life. Most importantly, don't forget to enjoy the music along the way!



CREATIVE CONNECTIONS

Silence

By Leena Jere

In ancient Greece, a supposed golden era of history for queer people, it was believed to be impossible for a woman to love another woman. Of course, we know they were wrong. We have records of Sappho, her love poems to other women, her pleas to the goddess of love, her declaration that “someone will remember us... even in another time.” We can call the denial of her love for women many things: misogyny, homophobia, erasure.

Silence.

It’s a longstanding queer tradition, originating far before ancient Greece, and probably far away from its shores. I don’t think anyone could pinpoint where it started. But it persisted in the charred bodies the late Romans left of the sinners and sodomites. It’s behind the bars of the cells of those who dared to love another in the wrong place and time. It’s the ever fleeting cultures of the colonized. It’s the overwhelming grief that flooded the empty streets and bars in Greenwich Village. It’s in the phrase “Don’t ask, don’t tell”. Silence is our history.

But about 50 years ago, something incredible happened. A riot, a movement, the culmination of centuries of pent up anger, of pent up noise. And we rose. And we said “We will not be silent anymore”. And a year later, we said the same thing, and the year after that, and the year after that. We made flags. We made statements. We took the rainbow and dared them to silence something so loud. We had parades and we made music. We made a promise to end that eternal tradition, whatever it takes.

But 50 years later, that tradition remains eternal.

It isn’t failure, not by any measure. But there is still work to be done. To yell “I’m here! I’m queer!” is still a privilege. To wear a rainbow proudly is a privilege. To break silence is a privilege. To some, it’s a privilege to be had in some places but not others. To some, it’s not a privilege they can even entertain. To some, speaking out is a death sentence.

And those people deserve to be celebrated too.

So often, our goal is to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves. In fact, it’s our obligation as people who can safely speak out to do so. But some days, whether it’s marked on the calendar or merely decided by personal choice, we must also put down our flags and lower our voices and put our heads down, not in mourning or concession, but in solidarity with those to whom we owe our liberation and with those to whom we are promising better futures.

Euphoria: A State of Toxicity

By Nathan Phillips

What is *Euphoria*? No, I'm not talking about happiness. I'm talking about the mangled product of Sam Levinson not going to therapy and bottling up all that's negative and shoving it down viewers' throats in the most visually stunning way. Film majors such as myself don't watch *Euphoria* because we enjoy it, we watch it because we're addicted to how *Euphoria* is technically made and constructed. You give Gen-Z a structure with something and they latch on to that structure for dear life. We're the generation that's going to change the world and we don't quit so when we see a problem, we hold on to it.

Why do normal people watch *Euphoria*? Starpower with Zendaya, it's all their friends talk about, drugs and living a pained life isn't something so unfamiliar to everyone... the list goes on. But that's not the point. *Euphoria* is likely one of the most toxic shows to exist currently on television. Almost every character in the show, especially the teens played by adults in their mid-twenties, are based on the most toxic high school archetypes possible. Not to mention, sex, nudity, and drugs, are portrayed as a dreamy culture. Sam Levinson created the show and Zendaya signed on, in hopes of communicating how messed up the world is when you do drugs. However, when you combine that plan and get the angelic musical artist Labrinth for the soundtrack, Marcel Rev (a brilliant Hungarian cinematographer), and everyone in their respective technical departments is on their "A" game, it's hard to make what should be a scary nightmare, something besides a crazy fever dream.

The first season was beloved by millions and the second season set records for viewership on HBO Max. A third season is on its way despite drama and controversy between Sam Levinson and the show's actors.

Season one had a writer's room but season two lacked that after Sam Levinson didn't hire anyone and decided to write season two by himself. The finale of season two attempted to disguise itself from being an absolute nightmare by having Lexi's play fictionalize/retell the entire story of *Euphoria* thus far, but failed in its horrendous climax between Maddie and Cassie. Multiple storylines throughout season one weaved into one another but season two often had character relationships and plots hanging by threads to entice viewers which could be deemed weak drama.

Through writing this article, am I trying to tell you not to watch *Euphoria*? No, but I do hope that you know why you're watching it and realize the culture it promotes and engages people in.

Top 5 Must-Watch Summer 2022 Movie Releases

By Julia Matuszek

When summer rolls around, one of the things at the top of my “to-do” list every year is to catch up on all of the shows and movies I didn’t have time to watch during the school year, as I’m sure many other students do as well. I also get very excited about all of the new movies as the summer tends to be one of the most jam-packed times for movie releases, so below is a list of five movies I believe will be must-watches this year.

1 *Elvis (2022)*

The King of Rock & Roll is getting his own biopic this summer! The film is directed by the beloved Baz Luhrmann and stars Austin Butler as the titular character, Olivia DeJonge as Priscilla Presley, and Tom Hanks as his manager Tom Parker. While Elvis lived an extremely eventful life, this movie focuses on his rise to fame and his complicated relationships with his wife Priscilla and his manager. While Elvis is a musical icon and considered one of the best musicians of all time to this day, it seems this movie is also becoming iconic as it received a 12-minute standing ovation at the Cannes Film Festival during its premiere.

The film will be released theatrically on June 24th, 2022.

2 *Thor: Love and Thunder (2022)*

Any Marvel release is always an exciting one for its dedicated fanbase. Fans seem to be especially excited to see Thor, played by Chris Hemsworth, make his return to the big screen with Taika Waititi directing again. The film follows Thor as he teams up with old friends Valkyrie, Korg, and Jane Foster to take down Gorr the God Butcher, who will be played by Christian Bale. With its stacked cast, 80s vibes, and intriguing plot the film is sure to become a new fan-favorite.

The film will be released theatrically on July 8th, 2022.

3 *Where the Crawdads Sing (2022)*

Like many of the best movies are, this film is based off of a book by the same title, written by Delia Owens. The movie stars Daisy Edgar-Jones as Kya the film’s protagonist who becomes a suspect in a murder case of a past fling. Besides a built-in fanbase and captivating story, the film will also feature an original song titled “Carolina” by Taylor Swift. Fans have patiently been waiting for this movie for a while, and I’m sure the wait will be well worth it in the end.

The film will be released theatrically on July 15th, 2022.

4 *Nope (2022)*

Any Jordan Peele directed movie is sure to make noise at the box office, and I don’t think Nope will be an exception. As is common with horrors and thrillers, not much is known about the film’s plot besides the fact that both animals and humans at a ranch will be affected by some discovery. The film will star past Peele collaborator Daniel Kaluuya as well as Keke Palmer, Barbie Ferreira, and Steven Yeun. If there’s one thing you can expect about this movie, it’s to be at the edge of your seat while watching it.

The film will be released theatrically on July 22nd, 2022.

5 *Bullet Train (2022)*

Every summer needs a good action movie, and this year I think Bullet Train will be the film to deliver that. As the name would suggest, while on a bullet train in Japan assassin Ladybug, played by Brad Pitt, gets thrown into a mission that is anything but peaceful, even though that’s all he wants. He comes head to head with numerous other assassins as they all try to piece together their somehow connected missions. Besides Pitt, this film also includes Sandra Bullock, Michael Shannon, Aaron Taylor-Johnson and even musician Bad Bunny. I think that as you watch this movie you will laugh and see some great action sequences, all while traveling through beautiful Japan.

The film will be released theatrically on August 5th, 2022.

Here's What to Watch Over the Summer

By Graham Reid

S This round of seasonal film recommendations comes from a *mélange* of ideas, lightly based off of my spring list. Personally, spring and summer share a similar sunny energy with colors returning to nature and the plants coming back into full bloom, but summer provides a much longer time for R&R, vacation, sunny weather, and is a prime time for mega-budget blockbusters to release on a regular basis. To start, one of my favorites is the Greek summer vacation on the island of Kalokairi in *Mamma Mia!* (2008), a classic where I come from. Spielberg's *Jurassic Park* (1993), *Jaws* (1975), as well as *The Goonies* (1985) are also great starter choices for the summer that capture adventure, fun, and the thrills of summer vacation.

One of the finest recommendations that I feel a great connection to with regards to summer is Richard Linklater's *The Before Trilogy*, especially *Before Sunset* (2004). All taking place in European travel hotspots, Ethan Hawke and Julie Delpy's romance is a prime story for the picturesque locales of Vienna, Paris, and Greece. While maybe not a summer vacation, I find the timing and energy of Jacques Tati's *Playtime* (1967) quite summer-fitting. This is visual comedy pushed to the maximum, an inventive French comedy film with the personage of Monsieur Hulot appearing as the inspiration for Mr. Bean. The air is fresh, Parisian sights are popping out of the sky, and everyone is having a happy time. Keeping with the European aesthetic, one of my

favorite films from a returning Italian maestro is Federico Fellini's *I Vitelloni* (1953). One of Fellini's most personal films sets itself in an Italian seaside village, focusing on the lives and stories of middle-aged men. Lastly, in Europe, I cannot recommend Céline Sciamma's *Portrait of a Lady on Fire* (2019) enough. While more sensual and romantically mature, the beauty of this film is more than enough – the colors, costuming, and sights of Brittany feel like a summer trip.

Moving on from Europe, maybe cross-country trips are more fitting, such as Alfred Hitchcock's Western American trips to Muir Woods and Mount Rushmore in *Vertigo* (1958) and *North by Northwest* (1959) respectively. *Vertigo* is much more haunting than the thrill of the chase in *North by Northwest*, but regardless, both are fitting summer films filled with the open air of nature and the calming cool and warm tones of the American West in the summer. Moving further south in California, one of my favorite films of all time, *Once Upon a Time...in Hollywood* (2019) transports us back to the summer of the sixties in Los Angeles, focusing on fictional stuntman Cliff Booth, fictional actor Rick Dalton, and the very real Sharon Tate. The vibes are all here, and all there is to enjoy is the car-top-down air of L.A. and the searing sun of California, beset by the shadow of the Manson Family.

On the East Coast of the United States, summer brings us to Wes Anderson's *Moonrise Kingdom* (2012) one of Anderson's best films, fully

stocked with a summer camp troupe led by Edward Norton. If the naturalistic energy of the Outer Banks is more your mood, Shia LaBeouf stars in *The Peanut Butter Falcon* (2019) a film with a warm heart geared towards road trips, boat trips, and the bond of friendship all across North Carolina. In New York City, Noah Baumbach's "coming-of-age-in-your-20s" story of *Frances Ha* (2012) captures the raw energy of moving to a new city and the rapid anxieties set on all sides of relationships versus one's own career. To round out the East Coast theme, I chose a classic from my book—Peter Weir's *Dead Poets Society* (1989) starring none other than Robin Williams. We all know "O Captain, my Captain!," but the rest of the film is just as fantastic as the last scene, again capturing a specific tone and energy that connects well to a warm, green, and colorful backyard on a summer night.

In a similar tone to *Frances Ha*, *La La Land* (2016) starts off in the summer, also centering around the themes of choosing fate and destiny, deciding between chasing love or focusing on one's career. If we travel to Hong Kong, we find ourselves in the atmosphere

of Wong Kar-wai's 1994 masterpiece *Chungking Express*, which tells the two separate stories of love-lost policemen caught up in romance around a snackbar. To finish out these summer trips of movies, we'll take two quick trips to South America with Werner Herzog's *Fitzcarraldo* (1982) and Disney classic *Up* (2009). *Fitzcarraldo* takes place almost completely in the jungle, with the titular Brian Sweeney Fitzgerald (known in the Amazon as "Fitzcarraldo"), portrayed by Klaus Kinski, a, Irish rubber baron who aspires to bring the opera of Enrico Caruso to the Amazonian jungle, taking upon himself the treacherous journey of transporting a steamboat up a mountain and through the rapids. Another dangerous but light-hearted trip occurs in *Up*, which we can all admire and want to watch during the summer and still feel the tenderness of our childhood. Who wouldn't want to fly in their house only supported by balloons to Paradise Falls?

At the Forest's Edge

By Annabella Battista

The sunlight twinkles down through the lush, translucent green leaves canopied above me. I lay on my stomach, feeling the grass indenting the skin of my legs, poking through the blanket I lie on. The humid air swirls around me, wrapping me in its warm and overpowering embrace, while the lazy breeze swims through the atmosphere, drawing my curls up into a languid, limitless dance. All around me, the smell of pine, dirt, and pure nature lingers and clutches onto my clothes, my blanket, my skin. While I attempt to train my eyes on the detailed descriptions on the page of my book, my gaze strays to the ground just below my nose, inches away from where the forest floor begins. Ants, spiders, and other harmless creatures make their way through the fallen pine needles, brown and dry from the sun. Some cross over my blanket, others crawl from my hand to my book back to the earth.

As the weather begins to turn from the chilly, crisp spring air into the lethargic heat of summer, I think of this spot just outside the forest, atop a slight hill in the yard of my family's home in Rockford. I long for the heat that grazes the bare skin of my legs and arms as I inhale the thick, hot air of the summertime and make my way through book after book after book. I

often place myself here on lazy, feverish days, drenched in the sunlight of golden July afternoons, with plans to drown my day in a novel, transporting me to a different world. As school winds down, I think about my reading spot, my portal into a magical world, and I grow excited at the prospect of immersing myself back into a realm of lush green, damp air, and overwhelming tranquility.

This spot at the forest's edge instills in me a sense of peace that few other things do. It's the same feeling as watching your favorite movie for the first time, or hearing a song that entrances you into a feeling of limitlessness. I hide away from the responsibilities of life, the stressors of adulthood, and the expectations of society here. I drench myself in the listless

summer heat, surrounded by the sounds and smells and feelings of being encompassed by the magical powers of nature, preserved in an everlasting moment in time. I ground myself in the stillness of summertime, as a cooling breeze twirls leaves and dandelions around me. And I read.



“Encourage one another, and may your mutual good example speak louder than any words can.”

- St. Louise de Merillac



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